TIMES-VIRGINIAN

A LIVELY WEEKLY NEWSPAPER AT HISTORIC APPOMATTOX COURT HO

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MAR 1982

In Pamplin

Community memories recalled

By FRANCES PAULETTE

When Saide Wootton came to Pamplin in 1942 to teach school there wasn't much to do in the way of entertainment after school but go down to the community store. In 1942 there was a W.R. Brightwell Store in Pamplin that offered the shopper a little bit of everything. Sadie Wootton even found her husband there; she married W. R. Brightwell in 1947.

"We used to go to the Brightwell Store every afternoon after school," commented Mrs. Brightwell. "We always bought a coke for five cents, a peppermint pattie for one cent, and a square of peanut candy for one cent. We spent all of seven cents every day after school. While we were eating we would often work the crossword puzzle in the newspaper belonging to the store."

Brightwell worked in a Pamplin bank for a good many years and when the bank was closed around the 30's he opened the store.

The long counter opposite the black pot bellied stove was marble and the light switch covers were made of solid brass. The floor was cement with wood overlaid.

In the front of the store there was an Ice Cream Parlor table and chairs and one booth. Almost every afternoon the table and booth would be full of Pamplin residents enjoying ice cream or a drink and a bit of conversation according to Mrs. Brightwell.

There was always time for conversation and a bit of visiting in the country store of yesterday.

Mrs. Brightwell remembers well one gentleman who would come in the store on Saturday evenings to do his shopping for the week. He always had a tale to tell.

There were lots of community people sitting around the store on Saturday evenings and when this particular man came in, they would be ready to listen. He would begin telling his story, talk for a few minutes, then stop and say, 'Give me five pounds of sugar', and then continue his tale telling. The story would continue for a few sentences and again he would pause, look at the storekeeper and say, 'Better give me a pair of black shoe strings' then resume his story. This went on until his story was finished and his order filled. He had time to shop leisurely and friends had time to listen.

"I can't remember much about prices," commented Mrs. Brightwell. "I just went into the store after we were married and got what I needed for the house."

Around the pot bellied stove was an easy chair and two benches.

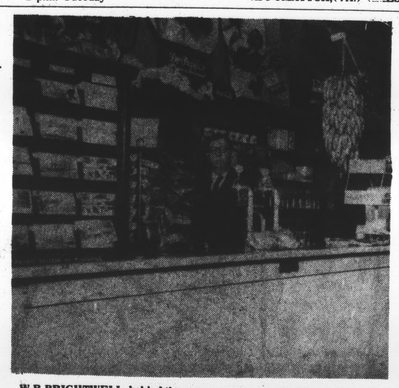
"Sometimes you could hardly move around in the store," said Mrs. Brightwell with a smile. "And the more people in the store, the more our daughter, Billy Starr, used to enjoy it."

Every afternoon Billy and her mother would go down to the store. Billy was about three years old at the time and loved the visit. As soon as they entered the building, Billy would head for the open cookie jars, reach in, get a handful of cookies and begin handing them out to all the customers.

The Brightwell Store is no longer in Pamplin. All that remains are the memories.

The Country Store, a place to buy groceries, household needs, everything from socks to nail polish, but most of all a place to enjoy a neighborly visit with friends, and, if you happened to get there at just the right time, free cookies too!

Now they were the 'good ole days'!!



W.R.BRIGHTWELL, behind the counter of his Pamplin Store in the early '40's ready to serve a five cent coke.

'Intense Effort'

Will factory be rebuilt?

By BILL SHERROD

An intense effort is underway by county and Pamplin officials to accomodate relocation of the recently destroyed garment factory in the Town of Pamplin.

The Amelia Dress Company garment factory, which was destroyed by fire in the early morning hours of March 8, was the principal industry and largest employer in the small eastern Appomattox town.

Factory officials report that the garment operation employed approximately 50 persons and had an annual payroll of approximately $400,000.

A meeting was held recently in which county officials met with Pamplin officials and representatives from groups such as the Appomattox County Development Corporation and the Appomattox County Chamber of Commerce.

Present at the meeting also were citizens of the Pamplin area who are concerned about the future of their town in the event that the garment factory is not rebuilt or is located in another area.

Reliable sources indicate that several other areas have contacted Bobby Stewart, owner of the garment factory which burned down, and offered him facilities in which to locate the industry.

At the recent meeting in Pamplin, several options were discussed regarding offers which the town could make Stewart in an effort to keep the industry in the area.

The most viable option, in the opinion of those present at the meeting, would be to renovate the Pamplin school building after it closes in June so that it would be suitable for housing the industry, and offer the building to Stewart for a new factory.

Both the Pamplin Town Council and the County Board of Supervisors have agreed, informally, to go along with the plan if it meets the approval of the county school board.

Another option discussed at the meeting would be to offer Stewart land on which to locate a new building, if he should decide to build a new facility.

Other options were touched on briefly, such as activiating the county's industrial corporation for raising money through a bond issuance, or seeking aid through the Small Business Administration.

One certain fact emerged from the discussion at the meeting, and that is that if the garment factory is not relocated in Pamplin, it will be a blow from which the tiny town may not recover.

"We've had so much to hurt our town," said Herman Richardon, a town merchant. "First we lost our school, now we've lost our factory. If we lose much more, we won't have a town."

Women hope factory returns

By FRANCES H. PAULETTE

Nearby residents watched in the early morning hours as fire destroyed the building of the Pamplin Branch of the Amelia Garment Company recently. With it, the equipment was ruined too, but one thing remained...the spirit of friendly good will that existed among the workers at the plant.

A covered dish luncheon was held on Thursday, March 11, at the Elon Baptist Church in Pamplin for the women who were left jobless as a result of the fire. Host and hostesses for the occasion were the Rev. Danny Owens, pastor of the church and the ladies of the church.

"I felt it was an opportunity for the church to minister to the community in a time of great need," commented the minister.

Owens visited every woman in his congregation who experienced a job loss as a result of the fire and expressed deep concern for every woman in the same situation.

As Mary Bruce, who worked for Amelia Garment in Pamplin for five years said, "It was home away from home, just another family."

The same feeling of comradery was express by all who were a part of the factory work force.

Kathleen Kress, working at the plant for 28 years had this to say, "It just feels like I have lost my second home. We all just hope that we can get our plant back in Pamplin.

"The Town of Pamplin is trying to provide incentive for industry to come back. It's a possibility the town will get the school building at the end of this school year," commented Owens.

"We have the labor and hopefully, within a month, a building will be available," Owens added.

The women working at the Pamplin factory shared more than a common work interest. They shared hopes and dreams. They shared disappointments and happy occasions.

Once a month all the 'girls' had a birthday party for everyone with a birthday that particular month. They really were 'one big happy family.'

As Margaret Garrison expressed it, "I have been working for 32 years, it was my living." It was a living for those girls but it was much more.....it was a way of life, a good way of life.

"Our boss, Jim Webb, he was the greatest....."

"The friendship of the girls has meant so much to me....."

"I feel like I have lost everything. I loved my co workers....."

And on and on went the comments about their great loss.

Matilda Owens seemed to say it all, "I have thoroughly enjoyed being with the company and the group of girls. It has been a pleasure and I count it a real blessing to have had a good boss like Jim Webb and such a lovely family of people to work with. God has been good to us and I'm surely trusting Him to replace our plant through Bobby Stewart who has been so good to us. I know we'll be together again."

The building is gone, the equipment is gone but the determination to work together again as one 'big happy family' not only remains but has seemed to grow stronger.

One of the women, Louise Rosser, had this to say after her job loss due to the fire, "I have worked at the Pamplin factory for 33 years. We were just a big happy family working together. We are all lost and out of place."

Expressing the sentiments of all the women of the factory work force, Rosser continued, "We ask anyone who can to help us get our plant back. We know Bobby will do all he can. We love the best manager and supervisor that can be had and we hate the thought of going anywhere else to work. This plant is part of my life."

A way of life is gone.....and these women want it back.

Revenue office to remain open

The office of the Commissioner of Revenue will be open on Saturday, March 27, and on two Saturdays in April, April 3 and April 10, according to Monte Mays, Commissioner of Revenue for Appomattox County.

"The office will be open these Saturdays in order to assist people, at their convenience, with their income taxes," Mays says.

The hours in which the office will be open on these three Saturdays will be 9 a.m. to noon, according to Mays.

Regular weekly office hours for the Commissioner of Revenue's office are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., according to Mays.

Chamber roster grows

Progress continues in the effort to revitalize the Appomattox County Chamber of Commerce, with a total of 17 members having indicated their support with chamber dues.

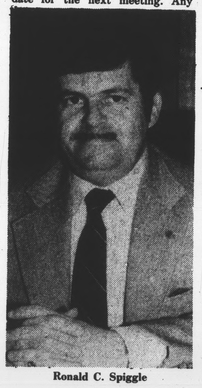
At a Monday night meeting of the chamber's board of directors, chamber treasurer Douglas Webb reported that Jim Nolen Associates, White's Auto, Dr. Anthony W. Anneski, Appomattox Office Supply, Times-Virginian Printing Corp., Farmers National Bank, Brod Pack, J. E. Jamerson, Webb's Tire, American Federal Savings and Loan, Geraldine Marshall, Falling River Realty, Times-Virginian newspaper, W. S. Slagle, Bob Jamerson, Ed Hopkinson, and Appomattox Hardware have all paid dues to support the revamped chamber of commerce.

William Slagle, representing the chamber's membership committee, said that the committee is preparing to send letters to existing chamber members who have not paid their dues, and preparing to send letters to prospective chamber members inviting them to join.

In addition, the brochure committee reported on progress in compiling a new chamber brochure to be circulated advertising Appomattox County. Chamber president Jim Nolen noted that there are currently requests for 8,000 chamber brochures which cannot be filled because the chamber has no brochures.

In a related development, the chamber secured the volunteer services of Frank Thomas, a professional graphics artist, in designing the chamber's brochure.

The chamber set April 26 as the date for the next meeting. Any person interested in joining the chamber as an individual ($25 annual dues) or as a business ($50) may contact Bill Slagle, Lloyd Vaughan, Geraldine Marshall, Carl Miller or Jim Nolen for further information.



Ronald C. Spiggle

Spiggle named to Water Control Board

Appomattox Mayor Ronald C. Spiggle, has been appointed by Charles S. Robb, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, to the Board of Transportation Safety for a two year term, effective March 5.

Spiggle, a 1964 graduate of Appomatox High School, is a son of the late John H. Spiggle and Mrs. Edna Brown Spiggle. He attended the University of Virginia, Lynchburg Extension; Central Virginia Community College and is a 1971 graduate in Mortuary Science. He is a Funeral Service Licensee and Vice President of Robinson Funeral Home, Inc.

A member of the Appomattox Town Council for four years, Spiggle has been Mayor of Appomattox since 1978.

He is a member of the Appomattox Lions Club, Falling River Country Club, St. Anne's Episcopal Church. He is a member of the Advisory Board of American Federal Savings and Loan, Appomattox Branch; American Legion Post 104; has served as Chairman of MDA for the past two years; served as Treasurer of Appomattox County Citizens for Robb; and is a Vietnam War veteran.

"I look forward to a happy and successful tenure on the board," said Spiggle.

"I plan to bring a rural, small town prospective to the board. I believe my eight years experience in local government will enable me to make significant contribution to all our citizens as we seek to prevent transportation death, injuries and property damage mishap throughout the Commonwealth," Spiggle concluded.

"It was most gratifying to note during the just ended session of the General Assembly that Governor Robb saw fit to appoint, and the General Assembly to confirm, The Honorable Ronald C. Spiggle, Mayor of Appomattox, to membership on the State Board of Transportation Safety. I think we are most fortunate to have a man of Mayor Spiggle's calibre to serve in this important capacity," said The Honorable Howard T. Anderson, of the 18th Senatorial District.

" I know of his dedication in the field of safety, as well as his other public service endeavors, and I am confident he will render an outstanding service during his term," Anderson concluded.

To Jersey Couple

L-G motel sold

The Lee Grant Motel, owned and operated for the past twelve years by Jim and Betty Baxter was sold on March 16 to Harry and Edna Lillie of Virginia Beach.

The Lillie's who originally hail from New Jersey, have four children, Edward, who will be helping with the new business venture; Sharon, who is married to Theo Penson, they are the parents of two children, Christine and Nicholas; Melissa, a student at Appomattox County High School and Allen a student at Appomattox Middle School.

"Our plans for the future of the motel are improvements to the motel itself, to the mobile park in the rear, and to the rental property on the rear of the lot," said Edward Lillie.

"In the near future we hope to build a small recreational area adjacent to Maude's Restaurant," Lillie concluded.

The sale transaction was handled by John Ackerman of Strout Realty who some years ago, had lived in new Jersey almost 'next door' to the Lillie's but the families had never met until just recently.

Lions Club meets tonight

The Appomattox Lions Club will meet on Thursday evening, March 25, at 6:45 at Maude's Restaurant. All members are urged to attend.

Town office open Saturday

The town office will be open this Saturday, March 27, in order that town citizens may purchase their auto tags.

To purchase tags, you must bring your auto registration and proof that you have paid your town taxes.

Father Darkleaf

By CALVIN ROBINSON

No doubt about it. Grass was greener when I ventured forth early Monday morning. The sun was coming up and we have had good rains. That helped. But I think there was so much green and it looks so good because spring is here. Arrived over the week-end. You must have noticed. Opportunity knocks in Spring and it is time to do all those things you planned while cooped up over the Winter. Lawnmowers are in action and I saw one garden plowed and ready. More every day. I am not sure we have reached the stage "when all danger of frost is over" but it is time for able-bodied folk to get outdoors.

* * *

Theme song of the week....When It's Forsythia Time in Appomattox." Alas, I have none. But most everyone else has a bit at least of the yellow showpiece. Found some budding Mock Orange in my backyard. And, glory be, whether you call'em buttercups, daffodils, jonquils or whatever, the glory is that they are in bloom. Ideal for indoor display. Brought in my first batch of the season at 4:42 p.m. last Wednesday and they are not ready to be discarded yet, although some flower lovers prefer fresh ones every day.

* * *

Col. and Mrs. Gerald A. Harty, of Walton Drive, Appomattox, brought me some recent newspapers from their travels. The Paradise News, Honolulu, Hawaii, The Chronicle, Goodland, Kansas, and The Daily Independent, Ashland, Kentucky. Thanks, Col. Harty served in the Air Force and moved here two years ago. A belated welcome.

* * *

Roy Trent, ACHS football star, has a scholarship from West Virginia Wesleyan, of Buchanan, W. Va. Will try for a middle guard position.

* * *

Warren Kyle Coleman, son of Kyle and Roberta Coleman, of Appomattox, has passed the Certified Public Accounting test. He has a master's degree in Business Administration from James Madison.

The ACHS baseball season got off to a good start Friday, with a 12-4 win over Cumberland. However, Heritage H.S. downed the local softball team, 8 to 4, also on Friday.

* * *

Bill Sherrod was proudly telling about the large bass he caught recently. A favorite fishing spot of his is around Chickahominy Lake, near Richmond.

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Hard to keep up with all the eventful happenings around the world. Leon Trotsky expressed it, "If you wanted a tranquil existence you should not have chosen to be born in the twentieth century." Perhaps, but I can always manage to find some good news. You can, too. Thanks for reading and seeya around. Appomattox Is A Growing Town.